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U. S. Department of Agriculture

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: "Carrots for Young and Old." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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Cousin Susan watched Horace and Ann as they ate lunch at their little table by the window. They chatted to each other and ate their carrot sandwiches with great enjoyment, as children should.

"I never can get used to the ways of these modern youngsters," she exclaimed. "When I was a child I ate carrots to make my hair curly. But now children eat them for vitamins and minerals. They are actually using those big words in their conversation to each other."

After a minute Cousin Susan continued, "What's more, in my childhood we ate only boiled carrots. Raw vegetables were not supposed to be good for children. Yet here are three-year-olds eating them raw and in sandwiches. Yes, I know they are grated fine, but still they are raw. And somehow I never thought of sandwiches for children's everyday meals. I always supposed that sandwiches were meant for picnics, teas or quick lunches. However, we live and learn. Modern ways in modern days."

I told Cousin Susan that the good old Earl of Sandwich, quite unconsciously, did modern children a favor when he invented that famous combination which is named after him.

Do you know the story of the origin of the sandwich, by the way? I'll have to stop here and recount it. Though the sandwich is now one of the great American institutions, it was invented in England by a member of the English nobility -- no other, in fact, than the fourth Earl of Sandwich. The story goes that the Earl was a great card player and begrudged the time spent each day in sitting at the dining table eating meals. So he conceived the happy idea of having his servants serve his meat between two slices of bread at the card table. In this way he could continue to play his game of cards undisturbed, and eat his lunch at the same time.

Since that day sandwiches of many kinds and in many forms have had great popularity. One of the chief reasons for their popularity is that they are so convenient -- such an easy way of serving and eating bread combined with other foods.

Well, as I said to Cousin Susan, the old Earl did children a great favor by this invention. A small sandwich is easy for a child to handle, is attractive, and is one of the nicest ways of serving him the carrots and other raw vegetables he needs in his diet. Grated carrots seasoned with a little salt and mixed with ~~creamed~~ butter make a bright-colored tempting filling between slices of bread. For older children, or for grown-ups, the carrot may be mixed with mayonnaise dressing. Finely chopped celery, lettuce, cabbage and even spinach may be used in the same way for children's sandwiches. The raw vegetables must be cut very fine or grated, because children often do not chew things thoroughly. If slices of bread are cut in quarters, the sandwiches will be just the right size for small fingers to hold.

Now what shall we say about eating carrots raw? In Cousin Susan's childhood people didn't know about the vitamins and minerals in food, so necessary for children's growth and good health. And chemists and nutritionists had not learned yet that much of the good in vegetables may be lost in the cooking water. So cooked vegetables were used, because they were softer and seemed easier for children to digest. Today children are given both raw and cooked vegetables, but the raw ones are served in a form easy for the children to chew.

All this reminds me that I have a menu today for the children -- a menu that features carrot sandwiches. Carrots are on my mind just now. They are such a good food and can be made into so many delicious dishes.

Oh, beg pardon. My mistake. The menu features carrot custard, not sandwiches this time.

Carrot custard is a very good hot main dish -- something like corn pudding, you know. I'll give you the recipe for it in just a minute.

All right. Carrot custard for the main dish; then, Buttered kale or other greens -- lots of different kinds on the market and in the garden these days; and, for dessert, Cut mixed fruit served with Crisp cookies. You might have sliced oranges and bananas. That's a combination children always love.

The carrot custard contains just five ingredients. Everybody ready to take them down?

3 eggs	3 cups of milk
1-1/2 cups of grated raw carrot	1 teaspoon of salt, and 3 tablespoons of melted butter.

Once more.(REPEAT):

Beat the eggs slightly. Add the grated carrot and other ingredients. Pour the mixture into a greased baking dish and place it on a rack in a pan of hot water. Bake in a moderate oven for about 1 hour -- or until the custard is set in the center. Serve it at once.

This is an inexpensive recipe since eggs and carrots are both low in price at present.

Even if carrots are no longer supposed to cause waves, either natural or permanent, in hair, they are valuable additions to the diet and deserve to be used frequently. My friends the nutrition specialists, tell me that carrots are very rich in vitamin A, as the yellow color indicates. They are also a good source of vitamin B, and have some vitamin C. That's not all. They also contain some of the minerals that make sound babies and red blood. These special nutritive values put carrots more in the class with green leafy vegetables than with the root vegetables. They are one of the root vegetables that can be used raw. Grated raw carrots are excellent not only in sandwiches but also in salads. One of my favorite salads is grated carrots and chopped cabbage combined with tart cooked dressing and served on lettuce. Chopped peanuts added, if you like them. One of the most beautiful salads I know is orange and carrot gelatin salad. Try it for a spring luncheon with a yellow or orange color scheme. Use a tart gelatin mixture containing orange and lemon juice and stir in the grated carrot when partly jellied. Mold and chill. Served on lettuce leaves with mayonnaise or cream salad dressing, it is a thing of beauty and tastes as good as it looks.

When it comes to cooking carrots, the Recipe Lady says that you don't have to worry about saving the color, as you do in cooking green or red vegetables. No matter what method of cooking you use, that attractive yellow color will remain, because it is insoluble in water and not affected by cooking conditions. So carrots may be boiled, baked, steamed or cooked in the pressure cooker or by the so-called "waterless cooking" method. Instead of bothering about saving the color, you can concentrate on saving the food value. Baking retains all of the food value and carrots baked with a little butter in a covered dish are excellent. When cooking carrots in water, either leave them whole or cut them the long way instead of slicing them across, so less of the food value will be lost in the water. For stews -- and carrots are old favorites for this purpose -- they can be sliced, since all the juice in the stew is eaten.

Let me suggest, while we're on the subject, some of the many ways in which carrots can be prepared. The Recipe Lady listed such a variety of delicious carrot dishes for me yesterday that I was almost dizzy. There are carrots creamed, mashed, baked, steamed, and boiled. When you want to be a little dressy, serve boiled carrots with parsley butter. Carrots cut like lattice potatoes, ^{maybe} boiled and served with butter. Carrots boiled until tender in syrup to make them shine are nice to use as a garnish. Then there are the combination dishes -- sliced carrots and apples, either fried or baked together; baked carrots and onions; and carrots and white turnips boiled together and served with butter. The new small tender carrots can be cooked with their skins on -- no scraping is needed.

Finally there's marmalade -- a bright tempting delicacy made with diced carrots, oranges, lemons and sugar.

Tomorrow the topic will be plumbing. Every housewife her own plumber? Well, not quite. But there's plenty that housekeepers should know on the subject

